

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 02419 252241Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PA-02 ICA-20 L-03
H-02 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 /098 W
-----118840 260815Z /20

R 252200Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6680
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

UNCLAS MANAGUA 2419

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, NU
SUBJECT: PUBLIC STATEMENT BY ARCHBISHOP OF MANAGUA

1. 16 MAY LA PRENSA CONTAINED INTERVIEW WITH MONSEIGNEUR MIGUEL OBANDO Y BRAVO, ARCHBISHOP OF MANAGUA. SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW WAS THE CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NICARAGUA.

2. ARCHBISHOP STATED THAT "HUMAN LIFE ISN'T WORTH A PENNY IN NICARAGUA." "THE CHURCH," HE WENT ON, "IS PROFOUNDLY CONCERNED TO SEE THAT, HERE, HUMAN LIFE IS NO LONGER RESPECTED." THE ARCHBISHOP STATED THAT THE OCCURRENCES OF THE PAST FOUR MONTHS -ESPECIALLY THE TWO CHAMORRO ASSASSINATIONS - HAVE REVEALED THE "TOTAL LACK OF JUSTICE WHICH PREVAILS THROUGHOUT THE SOMOZA REGIME." WHILE CONDEMNING THE CURRENT WAVE OF VIOLENCE, THE ARCHBISHOP CALLED IT "THE ... FERMENT LEADING TO SITUATIONS MORE EXPLOSIVE AND DANGEROUS TO THE SOCIAL, MORAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION (OF NICARAGUA)."

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3. COMMENT: OBANDO'S INTERVIEW WAS GIVEN SHORTLY AFTER HIS RETURN FROM A TRIP TO THE VATICAN. THIS DRAMATIC STATEMENT IS UNUSUAL IN THAT OBANDO IS NORMALLY VERY CAUTIOUS IN HIS PUBLIC REMARKS. BY MAKING SUCH A RATHITIOUS STATEMENT HE APPEARS TO BE COMPROMISING HIS ROLE AS A MEDIATOR IN THE POLARIZED POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT. THIS IS EXTREMELY UNFORTUNATE IN THAT HE HAS BEEN CITED BY MOST

OPPOSITIONISTS AS HAVING A POTENTIALLY KEY ROLE TO PLAY
IN PROMOTING A DIALOG WHEN AND IF THE OPPOSITION IS PREPARED
FOR SUCH A STEP.
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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PINT, SHUM, SOPN, SCUL, NU, (OBANDO Y BRAVO, MIGUEL)
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